



Arson

Definition

The Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program defines arson as any willful or malicious burning or attempting to burn, with or without intent to defraud, a dwelling house, public building, motor vehicle or aircraft, personal property of another, etc.

Data collection

Only the fires that investigation determined to have been willfully set—not fires labeled as suspicious or of unknown origin—are included in this arson data collection. Points to consider regarding arson statistics include:

- National offense rates per 100,000 inhabitants (found in Tables 1-4) do not include arson data; the FBI presents rates for arson separately. Arson rates are calculated based upon data received from all law enforcement agencies that provide the UCR Program with data for 12 complete months and are presented in Arson Table 1.
- This data collection does not include any estimates for arson because the degree of reporting arson offenses varies from agency to agency. Because of this unevenness of reporting, arson offenses are excluded from Tables 1-7, all of which contain offense estimations.

The number of arsons reported by individual law enforcement agencies is available in Tables 8-11, arson trend data (indicating a year-to-year change) are in Tables 12-15, and arson clearance data (crimes solved) can be found in Arson Table 2 and Tables 25-28.

Overview

- Nationally, 69,055 arson offenses were reported by 13,943 agencies that submitted arson data in 2006 to the UCR Program. (Of those agencies, 13,901 provided expanded offense data about 61,304 arsons.)

- Arsons involving structures (residential, storage, public, etc.) accounted for 42.3 percent of the total number of arson offenses. Mobile property was involved in 28.2 percent of arsons. The rest were arsons of other types of property.
- The average value loss per arson offense was \$13,325.
- Arsons of industrial and manufacturing structures resulted in the highest average dollar losses (an average of \$66,856 per arson).
- In 2006, arson offenses increased 2.1 percent when compared with arson data from the previous year. (See Table 12.)
- The rate of arson was 26.8 offenses for every 100,000 inhabitants of the United States in 2006.

Expanded arson data

Expanded offense data are the details of the various offenses that the Program collects beyond the count of how many crimes law enforcement agencies report. These details may include the type of weapons used in a crime, type or value of items stolen, and so forth. In addition, expanded data include trends (for example, 2-year comparisons) and rates per 100,000 inhabitants.

Expanded information regarding arson is available in the following tables:

Trends (2-year): Tables 12, 13, 14, 15

Property types: Table 15

Arson Table 1, "Arson Rate, by Population Group, 2005"

Arson Table 2, "Arson, by Type of Property, 2005"

What you won't find on this page

Estimated arson data. The FBI does not estimate the number of arsons because of the variation in the level of contribution of arson data.

Clearances or arrest data for arson.